

To: Board of Supervisors
County Executive Office
Clerk of the Board

From: Dr. Robert Levin, Ventura County Health Officer



Date: November 15, 2021

Re: Recommendation regarding Social Distancing and Continued Remote Meetings of
Legislative Bodies

I continue to recommend that physical/social distancing measures be practiced throughout our Ventura County communities to minimize the spread of COVID-19, including at meetings of the Board of Supervisors and meetings of other legislative bodies in the County of Ventura.

The California Department of Public Health ("CDPH") and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") caution that the Delta variant of COVID-19, currently the dominant strain of COVID-19 in the country, is more transmissible than prior variants of the virus, may cause more severe illness, and that even fully vaccinated individuals can spread the virus to others resulting in rapid and alarming rates of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>). While the Delta variant is the currently circulating variant, the Delta-2 variant, its likely successor, is 10 to 15% more transmissible. Current case and hospitalization rates have remained stubbornly higher than they were in the days leading up to the most recent surge. In some counties in our state, these rates are starting to climb again. We are facing the winter holidays and the opportunities these holidays present to promote transmission of COVID-19 infection. The winter season and its associated cold weather drives people indoors and provides another opportunity to spread the highly transmissible COVID-19 virus. Associated with these events last year our county experienced a surge in COVID-19 cases.

Whether vaccinated or not, positive individuals are contracting the Delta variant and infecting others in our communities. Social distancing and masking are crucial mitigation measures to prevent the disease's spread. Remote meetings of legislative bodies in the County, including but not limited to the Board of Supervisors are a recommended form of social distancing that allows for the participation of the community, county staff, presenters, and legislative body members in a safe environment, with no risk of contagion. It is recommended that legislative bodies in the County continue to implement 100% remote meetings. Just as it is likely that the current County order requiring the use of face coverings indoors will be in place beyond the first of the year,

though driven by good intentions, lifting the remote meetings policy at this time would be premature.

If you have any questions regarding this recommendation, please do not hesitate to contact me.